IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 19 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Please amend Claims 12 and 23 as follows. The text of all the pending claims are given below for the Examiner's convenience.

12. (Amended) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side, a first lens unit of positive refractive power, a second lens unit of negative refractive power, a third lens unit of positive refractive power and a fourth lens unit of positive refractive power, zooming from a wide-angle end to a telephoto end being effected by moving said second lens unit toward the image side, and shifting of an image plane due to zooming being compensated for by moving said fourth lens unit,

wherein said second lens unit consists of four single lenses including three negative lenses and one positive lens, and at least one of said four single lenses is an aspherical lens, and

wherein the zoom lens satisfies the following condition:

$1.28 < |R24/R25| < 3.20$

where R24 and R25 are radii of curvature of the fourth and fifth lens surfaces, respectively, when counted from the object side, in said second lens unit.

13. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to claim 12, wherein said second lens unit consists of, in order from the object side to the image side, a negative first lens having a concave surface of larger curvature facing the image side than that of an opposite surface thereof, a bi-concave negative second lens, a positive third lens having a convex surface of larger curvature

facing the object side than that of an opposite surface thereof and a bi-concave negative fourth lens.

14. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to claim 12, wherein said aspherical lens is said third lens.

15. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to claim 12, satisfying the following condition:

$$0.25 < |f2/fA| < 0.41$$

where

$$fA=\sqrt{fw \cdot ft}$$

wherein f2 is a focal length of said second lens unit, and fw and ft are focal lengths in the wide-angle end and the telephoto end of said zoom lens, respectively.

16. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to claim 12, satisfying the following conditions:

$$36 < \nu n < 65$$

$$20 < \nu p < 35$$

where νn is a mean Abbe number of materials of negative lenses which constitute said second lens unit, and νp is a mean Abbe number of materials of positive lenses which constitute said second lens unit.

17. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to claim 12, satisfying the following condition:

$$1.71 < Nn < 1.95$$

where Nn is a mean refractive index of materials of negative lenses which constitute said second lens unit.

18. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to claim 12, satisfying the following condition:

$$0.79 < |R22/f2| < 1.32$$

where R22 is a radius of curvature of the second lens surface, when counted from the object side, in said second lens unit, and f2 is a focal length of said second lens unit.

19. (Cancelled) A zoom lens according to claim 12, satisfying the following condition:

$$1.28 < |R24/R25| < 3.20$$

where R24 and R25 are radii of curvature of the fourth and fifth lens surfaces, respectively, when counted from the object side, in said second lens unit.

20. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to claim 12, satisfying the following condition:

$$0.98 < |R26/R27| < 3.55$$

where R26 and R27 are radii of curvature of the sixth and seventh lens surfaces, respectively, when counted from the object side, in said second lens unit.

23. (Amended) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side, a first lens unit of positive optical power,

a second lens unit of negative optical power, said second lens unit moving during zooming,

a third lens unit of positive optical power,

a fourth lens unit of positive optical power, said fourth lens unit moving during zooming,

wherein said third lens unit has, in order from the object side to the image side, a positive lens having an aspherical surface and a negative meniscus lens having a convex surface facing the object side, and wherein said second lens unit has three negative lenses and one positive lens.

24. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 23, satisfying the following condition:

$$0.24 < |f2/fA| < 0.33$$

where

$$fA = \sqrt{fw \cdot ft}$$

wherein fw and ft are focal lengths at the wide-angle end and the telephoto end of the entire zoom lens, and f2 is the focal length of said second lens unit.

25. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 23, satisfying the following condition:

$$0.86 < |f3/fA| < 1.09$$

where

$$fA = \sqrt{fw \cdot ft}$$

wherein fw and ft are focal lengths at the wide-angle end and the telephoto end of the entire zoom lens, and f3 is a focal length of said third lens unit.

26. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 23, wherein said fourth lens unit moves during focusing, and the following condition is satisfied:

$$0.40 < \beta 4T < 0.55$$

wherein $\beta 4T$ is the magnification at the telephoto end of said fourth lens unit with an object at infinity.

28. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 23, satisfying the following conditions:

$$36 < \nu n < 65$$

$$20 < \nu p < 35$$

where νn is the mean Abbe number of the materials of the negative lenses that constitute said second lens unit, and νp is the mean Abbe number of the material of the positive lens which constitutes said second lens unit.

29. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 23, satisfying the following condition:

$$70 < Nn < 1.95$$

where Nn is the mean refractive index of the materials of the negative lenses that constitute said second lens unit.

30. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 23, wherein said second lens unit comprises, in order from an object side to an image side,

a first negative lens having a concave surface of stronger optical power on the image side than on the object side,

a second negative lens both surfaces of which are concave,

a first positive lens having a convex surface of stronger optical power on the object side than on the image side, and

a third negative lens, both surface of which are concave.

31. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 30, satisfying the following condition:

$$0.82 < |R22/f2| < 1.07$$

where R22 is the radius of curvature of the second lens surface counted from the object side of said second lens unit and f2 is the focal length of said second lens unit.

32. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 30, satisfying the following condition:

$$66 < |R24/R25| < 4.00$$

where R24 and R25 are the radii of curvature of the fourth lens surface and the fifth lens surface, respectively, counted from the object side, of said second lens unit.

33. (Unamended) A zoom lens according to Claim 30, satisfying the following condition:

$$00 < |R26/R27| < 1.46$$

where R26 and R27 are the radii of curvature of the sixth lens surface and the seventh lens surface, respectively, counted from the object side, of said second lens unit.

34. (Unamended) An optical appliance comprising a zoom lens according to Claim 23.

Please add new Claims 35-42 as follows:

--35. (New) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side, a first lens unit of positive refractive power, a second lens unit of negative refractive power, a third lens unit of positive refractive power and a fourth lens unit of positive refractive power, zooming from a wide-angle end to a telephoto end being effected by moving said second lens unit toward the image side, and shifting of an image plane due to zooming being compensated for by moving said fourth lens unit,

wherein said second lens unit consists of four single lenses including three negative lenses and one positive lens, and at least one of said four single lenses is an aspherical lens, and

wherein said second lens unit consists of, in order from the object side to the image side, a negative first lens having a concave surface of larger curvature facing the image side than that of an opposite surface thereof, a bi-concave negative second lens, a positive third lens having a convex surface of larger curvature facing the object side than that of an opposite surface thereof and a bi-concave negative fourth lens.

36. (New) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side,

a first lens unit of positive optical power,

a second lens unit of negative optical power, said second lens unit moving during zooming,

a third lens unit of positive optical power,

a fourth lens unit of positive optical power, said fourth lens unit moving during zooming,

wherein said third lens unit has a positive lens, both surfaces of which are aspherical, and wherein said second lens unit has three negative lenses and one positive lens, said zoom lens satisfying the following condition:

$$0.86 < |f3/fA| < 1.09$$

where

$$fA=\sqrt{fw \cdot ft}$$

wherein fw and ft are focal lengths at the wide-angle end and the telephoto end of the entire zoom lens, and f3 is a focal length of said third lens unit.

37. (New) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side,

a first lens unit of positive optical power,

a second lens unit of negative optical power, said second lens unit moving during zooming,

a third lens unit of positive optical power,

a fourth lens unit of positive optical power, said fourth lens unit moving during zooming,

wherein said third lens unit has a positive lens, both surfaces of which are aspherical, and wherein said second lens unit has three negative lenses and one positive lens, and wherein

wherein said fourth lens unit moves during focusing, and the following condition is satisfied:

$$0.40 < \beta 4T < 0.55$$

wherein $\beta 4T$ is the magnification at the telephoto end of said fourth lens unit with an object at infinity.

38. (New) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side,

a first lens unit of positive optical power,

a second lens unit of negative optical power, said second lens unit moving during zooming,

a third lens unit of positive optical power,

a fourth lens unit of positive optical power, said fourth lens unit moving during zooming,

wherein said third lens unit has a positive lens, both surfaces of which are aspherical, and wherein said second lens unit has three negative lenses and one positive lens, and

wherein said second lens unit comprises, in order from an object side to an image side,

a first negative lens having a concave surface of stronger optical power on the image side than on the object side,

a second negative lens both surfaces of which are concave,

a first positive lens having a convex surface of stronger optical power on the object side than on the image side, and

a third negative lens, both surface of which are concave, and

said zoom lens satisfying the following condition:

$$66 < |R24/R25| < 4.00$$

where R24 and R25 are the radii of curvature of the fourth lens surface and the fifth lens surface, respectively, counted from the object side, of said second lens unit.

39. (New) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side, a first lens unit of positive refractive power, a second lens unit of negative refractive power, a third lens unit of positive refractive power and a fourth lens unit of positive refractive power, zooming from a wide-angle end to a telephoto end being effected by moving said second lens unit toward the image side, and shifting of an image plane due to zooming being compensated for by moving said fourth lens unit,

wherein said second lens unit consists of four single lenses including three negative lenses and one positive lens, and, of said four single lenses, a surface of the object side of the third lens in order from the object side is an aspherical surface.

40. (New) A zoom lens according to claim 39, satisfying the following condition:

$$0.25 < |f2/fA| < 0.41$$

where

$$fA = \sqrt{fw \cdot ft}$$

wherein f2 is a focal length of said second lens unit, and fw and ft are focal lengths in the wide-angle end and the telephoto end of said zoom lens, respectively.

41. (New) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side, a first lens unit of positive refractive power, a second lens unit of negative refractive power, a third lens unit of positive refractive power and a fourth lens unit of positive refractive power, zooming from a wide-angle end to a telephoto end being effected by moving said second lens unit toward the image side, and shifting of an image plane due to zooming being compensated for by moving said fourth lens unit,

wherein said second lens unit consists of four single lenses including three negative lenses and one positive lens, and at least one of said four single lenses is an aspherical lens,

wherein the zoom lens satisfies the following condition:

$$0.25 < |f2/fA| < 0.41$$

where

$$fA=\sqrt{fw \cdot ft}$$

wherein f2 is a focal length of said second lens unit, and fw and ft are focal lengths in the wide-angle end and the telephoto end of said zoom lens, respectively.

42. An optical apparatus comprising:

an optical element; and

a zoom lens, adapted to be connected to said optical element, comprising, in order from an object side to an image side, a first lens unit of positive refractive power, a second lens unit of negative refractive power, a third lens unit of positive refractive power and a fourth lens unit of positive refractive power, zooming from a wide-angle end to a telephoto end being effected by